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EDITORIAL COMMENT

THE FUTURE OF THE MAGAZINE



OUR years ago this month POETRY began. At that time the magazine was an experiment, a lone adventurer into a new field. A great art was neglected, even ridiculed; was in need of, not only a defender but an aggressive spokesman, an organ. Whether POETRY has fulfilled this function we will leave to its friends, or even to its enemies. The most casual observer cannot fail to admit the extent of the change during these four years, both in the spirit of the art and in its position before the critics and the public. And no informed person can fail to admit that the new movement, the new vitality, has been stimulated chiefly by this magazine and the currents of influence which have issued from it.

It is therefore a question of immediate importance whether the magazine is to continue after its initial period is over. The financial arrangement which made the experiment possible was a five-year guarantee fund of a little over five thousand dollars a year, donated to the cause by more than an hundred lovers of the art. This fund, which still amounts to more than one-half of our annual income, has enabled us to pay our contributors, and to keep abreast of office expenses, the rising cost of printing and paper, an ever-increasing correspondence, and all the incredibly numerous details of publication.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

As a business enterprise, however, POETRY is as yet far from independent. Its annual reports to the guarantors have shown steady and sure progress, but progress too slow to put the enterprise on its feet by October, 1917. Indeed, the present editor thinks that financial independence should not be expected: poetry, like the other arts, deserves and requires not one but many endowments, and this particular endowment, far from diminishing, should grow, in order that the work, so enthusiastically begun, may be still more effectively carried on.

Many of our guarantors, under the generous impulse of this feeling, have already expressed a desire to continue their contributions for a few more years. Others, however, feel, rightly enough, that they have done their share; or, in some cases, even more than they could reasonably afford. We therefore appeal more generally to all lovers of the art, all who wish to encourage its production and promote its public appreciation and influence.

Will not YOU, therefore, become, by contributing ten dollars a year, a Supporting Subscriber of POETRY? Thousands of public-spirited citizens in our various cities pay that much, or far more, to support institutions of art, orchestral societies, architectural schools, etc.; and certain journals of political or social opinion have enrolled hundreds of Supporting Subscribers at the same rate. YOU are a lover of poetry: will you not do as much to support a magazine in its interest? A roll of five hundred Supporting Subscribers would contribute as much as one hundred Guarantors. Like

The Future of the Magazine

the Guarantors, they will receive the magazine monthly, and once a year its report. We strongly urge YOU—each individual reader—to give us this evidence of your support.

If, however, you are not financially able to be either a Guarantor or a Supporting Subscriber, you can at least help in the good work by getting us one more subscriber. If each reader of POETRY will become a subscriber, and each subscriber will each year enroll one more, we shall be self-supporting before another five-year period shall have passed.

Do YOU wish POETRY to continue? Will YOU be partners with us in the effort to extend its life and increase its power?

H. M.

THE CHINESE CHANTING OF THE CLASSICS

In one of Mr. Yeats' books—*Thoughts on Good and Evil* I think it is—he gives an account of the method of chanting poetry in use by the early Irish bards. These bards, he says, deliberately pitched the speaking, not the singing, voice in definite if irregular intervals. He illustrates it with a magical setting in this style of a short poem of his own from *Countess Kathleen*.

It is interesting to compare this method of Irish bards with the system of chanting the classics in China, a system which was doubtless in use before the days of St. Patrick and which flourishes among scholars today.